

Meeting: Regional Waste Advisory Committee (RWAC) Meeting
Date: Thursday, July 20, 2023
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
Place: Zoom meeting
Purpose: *The purpose of the Regional Waste Advisory Committee is to provide input on certain policies, programs, and projects that implement actions in the 2030 Regional Waste Plan, as well as to provide input on certain legislative and administrative actions that the Metro Council or Chief Operating Officer will consider related to implementation of the 2030 Regional Waste Plan.*

Members in Attendance:

Marta McGuire, Metro
Alondra Flores-Aviña, Trash for Peace
Sharetta Butcher, North by Northeast Community Health Center (NxNE)
Lindsay Marshall, City of Tualatin
Christa McDermott, Community Environmental Services, PSU
Audrey O'Brien, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Eben Polk, City of Portland
Thao Tu, Vietnamese Community of Oregon
Beth Vargas Duncan, Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association (ORRA)
Ryan Largura, City of Troutdale
Andrew Bartlett, City of Hillsboro

1. CALL TO ORDER & MEETING OVERVIEW

Marta McGuire (Metro) brought the virtual meeting to order at 8:31 am and previewed the agenda.

2. Garbage and Recycling System Facilities Plan - Review Phase 3 Draft Scenarios

Marta introduced Estee Segal, Luis Sandoval and Marissa Grass from Metro, and Lyndsey Lopez from Jacobs.

Key points of the presentation included:

Presenters reviewed the System Facilities Plan project purpose and schedule. Currently, the project is in phase 3, developing scenarios. The scenarios have been built from identifying values and outcomes and identifying gaps in the current system. Four scenarios have been developed to respond to the identified gaps. Each scenario was reviewed by the committee. The committee participated in a guided review activity, answering specific questions about each scenario.

Member Discussion:

Ms. McDermott asked if regulating curb-side services would just be for regular garbage service, not bulky waste. Mr. Sandoval confirmed that was correct.

Ms. O'Brien asked in scenario B, if local governments would be required to collect more material than DEQ's requirements. Mr. Sandoval replied that her assumption is correct because Council has encouraged having fewer facilities which would mean a wider list of materials collected.

Ms. Vargas Duncan asked if Scenario B is discouraging self-haul. Mr. Sandoval replied that the Metro facilities would still accept self-haul materials, but there would be investments in other sectors, more capacity would be created to accept more materials at other locations.

Mr. Polk thinks that each scenario is based on insights of our current system. It seems that scenario B addresses the lack of accessibility for everyone, but more facilities does not necessarily mean more access.

Mr. Bartlett asked for more explanation in scenario B of the removal of the tonnage allocation. Mr. Sandoval confirmed that assumption and that tonnage would flow to the closest transfer station. Rates would be regulated for mixed waste and dry waste rates.

Mr. Largura asked for clarification on the rate regulation proposal. Mr. Sandoval replied that this scenario is still conceptual but most likely there would be a rate review that would find a region-wide rate that customers see while costs are covered across the system.

Mr. Largura asked when there would be the opportunity to “Frankenstein” these scenarios. Mr. Sandoval replied that during the workshop in September the team would be asking for participants to identify which parts of each scenario they like the most, and have the ability to mix and match the scenarios.

Ms. Vargas Duncan asked where funding would come from for expanding curbside collection? Mr. Sandoval replied that by default it would be funded by the system fee. This process could allow for alternative funding methods.

A question from the chat was asked, “can you sharpen the difference between C and D?” Ms. Segal responded that scenario C has more distributed facilities that will aim to separate commercial and residential customers and make facilities more accessible to the general public. Scenario D would have less facilities that are larger and more efficient. All scenarios really speak to clarifying Metro’s role in the future.

A question from the chat was asked, “in scenarios where there are commercial facilities, have there been assessments on commercial needs in the region?” Mr. Sandoval replied that the team looked at wet waste tonnage. There is often a conflict between capacity and cost gaps.

Mr. Bartlett commented that cost is a large decision factor on these scenarios and that rough cost values would be greatly appreciated in advance of the September engagement. Additionally an understanding of environmental costs would be helpful to have as well.

There still seems to be a gap in household hazardous waste in Washington County.

A question from the chat was asked, “There was a question on how this would be funded and what would the impact be to general customers?” Lyndsey Lopez from Jacobs shared that they are currently working on cost and environmental impacts. They will be looking at overall costs, and what the impacts will be to the regional system fee and curbside customers. There will be a variety of assumptions made for the evaluation.

Ms. McDermott asked for clarity on the regulation piece in scenario B. Would that carry over into other scenarios? Also would appreciate more information on the allocation system, but would like to understand the chain of consequences for different regulatory changes. Concrete examples of what these proposed facilities look like would be much appreciated. Ms. Segal responded that the regulation is not assumed to be the same throughout the scenarios. We could mix and match piece of these scenarios as we move forward. The team does have pictures of example facilities, hoping to share more information like this at the September event. In scenario C the reuse centers would take items like batteries, paints, and aerosol cans. More hazardous items would go to specific hazardous waste facilities.

There was a general request for more discussion on the scenarios. Ms. McGuire offered more time at the August meeting.

Mr. Polk asked if any of the scenarios addressed organics. Was it pulled out of the scope of the project? Mr. Sandoval responded that the team is addressing this in scenarios B, C and D with the goal of increasing acceptance of organics at facilities. In all scenarios it is proposed that Metro

Central Transfer Station would accept and process organics that could go to multiple end markets to build resiliency in the system.

Ms. O'Brien asked if the end market for organics meant compost or anaerobic digester? Mr. Sandoval meant any entity that is willing to accept the organic material in a variety of forms.

Ms. Vargas Duncan shared that she understands the capacity issues and wanting to have more capacity in different locations. She would like to see much more specific details, and look concretely at what the need is where and for what kind of items. Hopes to find the most financially and environmentally efficient way to address these issues. Ms. McGuire responded that this gets at the technical analysis that was behind the building of these scenarios and proposed sharing that information with the group.

The committee participated in a guided exercise answering specific questions about the proposed scenarios – their positive impacts, negative impacts and missed opportunities.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Kristin Leichner, with Pride Disposal, commented that rate regulation in these proposed scenarios would be a trade-off for more certainty regarding customers, material flow and revenue. Currently Metro has a guarantee of tons, but private stations do not have this certainty. Please consider this when discussing rate regulation.

Shannon Martin, Gresham Oregon, does not see household hazardous waste in east Multnomah county in the proposed scenarios which has the most diverse population in the region. Encourages Metro to add these services.

Final Remarks

Ms. McGuire moved the two remaining agenda items and approval of the May meeting minutes to a fall meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 10:30 a.m.